To Richard Perl

POINT FOUNDATION

Introduction

Point is the educational, not-for-profit organization that publishes *The Whole Earth Catalog* and the quarterly *Whole Earth Review.* Stewart Brand and friends produced the first *Whole Earth Catalog* in 1968, as "an evaluation and access device" to provide individuals and small groups with a way to get the best available tools and ideas. A companion magazine, *The CoEvolution Quarterly,* was inaugurated in 1974 to offer more frequent updates of the Catalogs and in-depth commentary in the form of articles; its name was changed to *The Whole Earth Review* in 1984. Our most recent Catalog, *The Millennium Whole Earth Catalog*, was published through Harper San Francisco in November, 1994.

Point publications have served a generation of readers as a guide for creating a sane, diverse, realistic and interesting future, using their own personal inventiveness—aided by excellent tools and sound ideas. Twenty-seven years after the first *Whole Earth Catalog*, there is still no other publication that combines these features:

- Presenting the relationship between humans and the environment from a whole systems perspective. "Whole Earth" is now almost a cliché. It is easy to forget that this was a life-changing and culture-changing viewpoint when espoused by the first *Whole Earth Catalog* in 1968.

- Connecting readers with tools and resources. Whole Earth's theme has always been "Access to Tools and Ideas." Our purpose is to move beyond either vague romanticism about "oneness with nature" on the one hand or alarmism and complaints on the other. Instead, we point to people making a difference and to the resources readers can use to think and act for themselves. For instance, our recent issue on water included more than 120 reviews of books and tools, a "Watershed Yellow Pages" with contact information about 175 organizations working on water issues around the world, and the birth announcement of an important new organization, the International Ecological Design Society.

- Introducing innovative thinkers and ideas. Alternative energy paths, intentional communities, personal computers, the Gaia Hypothesis, deep ecology, bioregionalism, watershed conservation and electronic democracy were all introduced and discussed in our pages well before they became mainstream topics of conversation and concern.

We provided the early forums for a long litany of innovators whose work has since achieved widespread recognition. To name just a few: MacArthur Fellow Amory Lovins, Susan Griffin, Ivan Illich, Stewart Brand, Mary Catherine Bateson, Lynn Margulis, Paul Hawken, Sallie Tisdale, John and Nancy Jack Todd.

- Integrity and Independence. We do not accept advertising for the products we review. We have demonstrated our willingness to keep a critical perspective, even about the people and movements we love. For instance, we predicted the potential of personal computers before most people had heard of them. But we also published "Computers as Poison" ten years ago, the same year we devoted an issue to a critique from within of excesses and misplaced priorities in the environmental movement.

Where We Are Going.

Point Foundation has begun the task of building for the next century, with the *Millennium Whole Earth Catalog* as a bridge volume to the future. Under the direction of Whole Earth's first woman Editor-in-Chief, Ruth Kissane, we are reshaping *The Whole Earth Review* for a radically different century from the one now coming to an end.

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We have accepted an ambitious mandate: to define, sharpen and report the cutting edge of thought and practice needed to make the future more sane, more sustainable — and more interesting. We recently added two new sections, Sustainability and Ecological Design. We have inaugurated a series on "Women and Water." Topics featured in our latest issues include, among others: nature's geometry, economics for humans, the Eros of everyday life, endangered music, and "The Environmentalist's Guide to the Public Library." Some upcoming features: comparative whole systems, the Top Ten Global Sustainability Projects, women and tools around the world, the "NGO Yellow Pages," learning in the information age, animals as ecosystem managers.

Meanwhile, we maintain that sane, sustainable living doesn't have to be humorless or dull; it is in fact just the opposite. So we keep our antennae tuned for intelligence on life-enhancing subjects not likely to be found in any comparable publication: a klezmer survey, an Irish bodhran video, books on geomatics, ginger, and the global brain. Where else will readers find, in a single issue, reviews of *The Body Atlas*, *Fiddler*, and *The Indian Review of Books*?

This year, we are launching the Sustainability Research Project. Continuing Point's work of the last quarter century, this project will identify and publish the next generation of writer-workers — the young (and not yet well-known) innovators, inventors and thinkers in the tradition of the J. Baldwins and John Todds who first became known through Whole Earth. It will locate and publicize the best new techniques, alliances and projects in global sustainability. It will evaluate today's best efforts at achieving sustainability, while anticipating the challenges posed by new developments in energy, agriculture, resource use, and threats to endangered peoples, cultures and biodiversity.

We are also creating a new network of worldwide correspondents. Through these correspondents living in every region of the world — Hong Kong, Uruguay, Japan, Argentina, Kenya, India, China, Samoa, France, New Zealand, Holland, Fiji — we will draw upon the concrete wisdom of the whole human species, uncovering for people in developed and developing nations alike vital ideas for independence and sustainable well-being. As the sources for some of our best ideas will come from all over the globe, so too will our magazine gradually be read in every region of the earth. Whole Earth is dedicated to the whole earth, all its peoples and all its species.

Getting There

With WER's strong editorial foundation, economies we have instituted, and the unrolling of a targeted marketing effort, we can achieve a long-sought goal, to bring the *Whole Earth Review* to positive net operating revenues by 1998:

• A marketing study for Point Foundation by the Stanford University Business School Alumni Consulting Team showed the potential for substantially increasing circulation; we have initiated a many-pronged marketing plan, including direct mail solicitation, card packs, advertising, package inserts, and increased use of the Internet.

•*The Millennium Whole Earth Catalog*, published in 1994, will be redistributed this fall in an updated version.

• We have placed 10 percent of the content of *The Millennium Whole Earth Catalog* and selections from *The Whole Earth Review* on the World Wide Web and set up capabilities for taking *MWEC* orders and *WER* subscriptions online.

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Point Development.

Short-Term:

(1) Securing "bridge" financing to meet immediate deficits as we address 1993-1994 shortfalls and turn toward positive cash flow

(2) Financing to support circulation and distribution growth in order to generate income, increase self-sufficiency, make Whole Earth publications available to an expanded readership

Long-Term:

Building long-term Point stability, continuing circulation expansion, and underwriting new projects such as Sustainability Research and Whole Earth Correspondents, through:

- creating a Point endowment;
- developing an identified core of Point supporters;
- implementing a long-term funding strategy (planned giving, wills and trusts, annual fundraising events)

Funds Needed.

The attached budget projection shows steady increases in revenues over the next three years, based on the subscription development program we have outlined. The funds needed decrease each year until 1998, when we project a budget surplus.

Successful efforts by Point's board and staff have raised $60,000 in gifts and pledges so far this year. We require about $19,000 more to complete the job of deficit reduction. The balance of the funds needed for 1995 goes directly into advertising, direct mail solicitation, package inserts, card packs and the other elements of the circulation/development program. In 1996 and 1997, increased revenues from that program's success should cover regular operating expenses as well as a growing proportion of the expansion program itself (25 percent in 1996, 50 percent in 1997). By 1998, ongoing subscription development will be covered by expected revenues.

(See attachment for details).

Funds Needed Summary

	1995	1996	1997	1998
Operating Revenue	$665,010	$819,957	$935,141	$ 1,050,921
Operating Expenses	714,200	767,091	829,282	893,824
Circulation/Development	78,253	206,500	159,000	131,500

Additional Funds to Be Raised

	Rest of 1995	1996	1997
For Deficit Reduction	18,603		
For Circ./Development	78,253	153,633	53,141
Total	96,856	153,633	53,141

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